1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

581 unimportant; instead the man considers other factors such as his need for a wife, the marriage expenses including the bridewealth, and the physical attractiveness of the woman.

583 The previous relationship of the groom to the girl and her family can vary the bridewealth enormously. Often the groom, and/or his family, are acquainted with the girl, and/or her family, as neighbors and friends. When this is the case, then other factors tend to enter in to determine the bridewealth. But in a number of special and not uncommon situations, the groom is released from the bulk of the bridewealth or it is substantially lowered. If the girl is his cousin (the Kanuri [582] marry all cousins, although they claim it is not good to marry one's mother's sister's daughter) then he may find that only a small *sada'u* payment is necessary. About [584] one-fifteenth of all Kanuri marriages are of this kind, and of these about one-fifth involve unions in which the little cousin was promised to the boy when she was an infant at the time that he was circumcised, roughly about puberty. At that time he becomes her *luwali* or the dispenser of her marriage rights and can arrange for her future husband or marry her himself when she reached puberty. In other cases the 583 groom is a dependent or client of the girl's *luwali* (usually her father) and the 581 marriage tends to cement the relationship between him and the father even further. Indeed many subordinates of "big men" in Bornu think of their superiors as being obliged to help them find a wife. In such a case the groom may assume only a small portion of the expenses, or the wife-to-be is a daughter or relative of the superior and the latter depresses the payments purposely, so his subordinate can marry. In a few cases girls are given to *mallams* (koranic teacher-priests) and no bridewealth is required. Such unions are called "marriages of charity" and the *luwali* who abrogates his rights to bridewealth in this fashion is considered to be a pious man. In actual practice it is not very common. This is seen in the marriage histories of the *mallams* themselves who may have married once in five or six times this way but rarely more than that. *Mallams* claim that they do not like it because it makes them obligated to the wife-giver for free prayers, constant officiating as a religious leader in the household of the *luwali*, and so on, so that they avoid such charity in order to maintain their independence. This avoidance is mitigated if they are already members of the *luwali's* household and the marriage is simply cementing the relationship.

583 The bargaining abilities on both sides of the marriage can also determine the bridewealth. The groom's representatives are told by the girl's family, through her *luwali*, that the groom can expect many gifts which will compensate for an elaborate and expensive wedding. The groom's representatives tell the woman and her relatives, especially her *luwali*, of the groom's qualities, especially his kindness and generosity, his wealth and expectations of more, his potentialities as a successful man, and his connection through friends, through his own services, and relatives to very important people. On his side, the *luwali* speaks of the benefits to be gained by marriage to this particular girl and slowly the bridewealth payment, especially the *luwaliram*, emerges at a set price. On her first wedding night, a pre- [585] viously unmarried girl also bargains at great length in order to bid up a special consummation fee that is her right.

If the marriage arrangements take place in the autumn, or around harvest time, it is assumed that the man will have more cash than at other times. Thus the

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

price at this time of year for nearly everything, including weddings and bride-wealth, goes up.

When all the exchanges are completed everyone participating in a wedding gets some present of money, food, and clothing. The *luwali*, especially at first marriages, gets the bulk of the bridewealth and distributes the rest to the girl's family both on her mother's and her father's side. After the first marriage the girl tends to keep more and more of the bridewealth for herself, giving the *luwali* what amounts to a fee for serving as the official bride-giver. It is also important to note that when there are disputes between a husband and wife, the first person to whom both turn for arbitration is the *luwali*.

The Kanuri think of getting married in several ways. First of all they divide all marriages into first marriages (to take a girl or a small girl), and secondary marriages with a divorced woman (to take a woman or to take a divorced woman). First marriages take place for a girl around the time of puberty, while boys do not marry until they are in their late teens or early twenties, and young men of twenty-eight and twenty-nine who have not yet been married are not hard to find.

An interesting sidelight on marriage with previously unmarried young girls is the ambivalence men feel about it. Men obtain much prestige from such a marriage. But its cost invariably puts a man into great debt, and consummation of the marriage itself, traditionally, is a semi-public affair in which old women related to the girl sit outside the marriage hut and whisper to their newly-wed relative that she must resist the advances of her husband. They do this until very late at night or until they are given some proof of the girl's virginity by the husband. They then make a fearful clatter in the town or village to announce the premarital chastity of their young relative. Standards of personal appearance and sexual attraction are important to Kanuri men and center on more sexually mature women. Such standards deal with hair style, facial symmetry, type of walk, and other physical attributes and skills, as well as ability at wifely chores. None of these attributes are in any degree well-developed among young girls, so that the man must control himself and almost publicly proclaim his manhood and sexual prowess with a young girl who is not defined as sexually exciting by the culture. This causes much anxiety and I have seen men praying almost continually for several weeks in order to gain the strength to carry out a virgin's consummation. It is important to note that when some western educated Kanuri talk about marriage they immediately fasten on this semi-public consummation of the girl's first marriage as a custom that will be dropped in the future, and certainly one they do not intend to carry out or even allow in their lives. From the girl's point of view, as education in western-style schools becomes more common and the length of time in school increases, then the time of first marriage for the girls will move ahead. At present however there are only a handful of Kanuri girls who attend schools beyond the age of traditional marriage.

But what is the basis for the conflict? Why are men willing to suffer to gain such an unattractive wife? Men always explain it in the same way. A young girl has never been touched sexually by other men; he is the first; he can train her as he likes, and teach her to be a proper wife to suit his own personal wishes. Besides, it is a good Muslim custom, they always add, as they do about almost every custom when they are asked. In this case they are correct, for such young marriages are very

widespread throughout the Islamic world. However there is more to it than that—indeed it comes close to the heart of the Kanuri way of looking at things. Kanuri social life is a constant search for fruitful social contacts in which one man is the superior and the other a subordinate to him. Between the sexes, the culture defines women as inferior in rank to men. Thus the place universally available to all men for the achievement of subordinates is the family and the household, and the ideal female subordinate is a young girl, one who has not yet been divorced, that is rejected her subordination to her husband, and one whom the husband can train to become properly obedient to his own personal wishes. Thus marriage to a previously unmarried girl symbolizes what every man wants, not sexually, but socially; unblemished and complete obedience from docile subordinates who receive material benefits in return for subordination. Seen in this light the marriage with young girls then becomes more understandable for it represents some of the most profoundly important values in the society.

Most Kanuri do not, however, marry girls who have never been married before. Generally they marry a *zower*—or divorced woman. This is carried out with much less ceremony than the virgin marriage. Men may see a divorced woman they like and simply send a friend who asks if she would like to marry. Or the men may begin an affair with her, give her market money once a week just as he would a wife, and then during this time decide whether or not he and this woman should proceed towards a marriage. Such liaisons are considered formally to be illegal extramarital relations, but in everyday life they are tolerated as a form of courtship. Harsh approbation is directed toward sexual relations by a man with another man's wife. Thus although a very few men claim to remain chaste in their relations with a divorced woman, most men agree that there is nothing seriously the matter with a discreet affair with such a person.

As Muslims the Kanuri also think of marriage as a relationship involving more or less *purdah*, or wifely confinement within the household. Generally, it is made quite clear before the marriage begins just how much constraint the husband expects. And for the most part such restrictions are positively related to the class and status of the husband. Thus the higher the status of the husband, the greater the probability of almost total confinement on the part of the wife. Certainly all Kanuri men would like their wives to remain inside the compound, however very few can afford to insist. To do so necessitates that there must be a well inside the compound, enough wealth so that the husband does not require the wife's work in the fields, and enough help so that he can send a male servant or client along with her on the few occasions when it becomes absolutely necessary for her to go out.

The Kanuri themselves categorize a few other forms of marriage on the basis of the relations already existing between the partners, or being set up by the marriage. They speak of cousin marriage, marriage with a religious practitioner, marriage with a wealthy or powerful person (a marriage of pleasure) as varieties of unions. They also mention the possibility of the sororate (marriage with a person called sister by one's dead wife) and the levirate (marriage by the younger brother of his dead brother's wife or wives). These latter are quite rare, and I have only recorded one case of the levirate in the last ten years, and none of the sororate. Kanuri think marriage with wife's sister, or person she calls sister while she is still

1: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1965) 1967 MS14 Kanuri MS14

to seniors, first in the household then in the society at large, that is the most important social learning of childhood. Kanuri society is hierarchical. Whether the person is in one compound or another, one social situation or another, there is always one common feature—rank and its determinants, power and authority. By living in several compounds, by seeing authority at work in the community, and by learning to generalize his response to authority, the young child learns to respond easily and gracefully to many combinations of rank and position. His counterpart in western society may be learning how to cope with the intricacies of modern urban technology, but he would certainly be no match for his Kanuri counterpart in the diplomacy necessary in dealing with superiors.

Puberty

Puberty is not an age-grade in the same sense as childhood or adolesence. Yet it deserves some special attention because it is a marker that separates these two life periods and creates a means for very important transitions especially for young girls. Sometime between the age of twelve and fourteen most girls undergo their first marriage. Boys on the other hand begin their adolescence. This is a more carefree time for them than the period of intense training for adulthood that a girl is suddenly confronted with as she moves from childhood into her teenage period and marriage.

However there are no absolutely sharp breaks even for a girl. A newly married young girl is not considered totally grown-up and sometimes she continues to wear her hair in the childhood style. If she divorces during this early period, usually the first three or four years after her first marriage, people often speak of her as *njim suri* or one who is only beginning to become a woman but who has not completed the change-over to full adultlhood.[1] At first the young wife still sees many unmarried childhood friends who will soon be getting married themselves. They visit her when she is confined to the house for varying periods depending upon how secluded her husband wishes his wife to be. Only gradually over the period of the first year or so of marriage does the young girl begin to participate fully as a wife. From the first she cooks food regularly because it is her duty and her right, and as time goes on she is seen more and more in the company of the older, adult women of the compound and the neighborhood. If she is not in total seclusion, like most rural wives, then she can be seen going with the women to the well or the market, and to women's festivities in the village.

Although rare it sometimes happens that a girl misses the opportunity to marry while still in her early teens. Leaving aside the very few girls who go on in school, such cases are rather tragic. The girl is either mentally deficient or a disturbed person, or one who people say has been having love affairs before marriage. In such cases she changes her hair style in her middle to late teens and takes on the role of a single divorced woman seeking a new husband and therefore open to courtship and sexual liaisons with men.

In Magumeri one young girl about fifteen or sixteen who was well de-

[1] Literally *njim suri* means to have seen inside the hut, that is she has been alone with her husband but only seen or glimpsed at the activities of adulthood not really practiced them in full.

586 587 with ease. Since most men marry a number of times in the course of a normal life, they are likely to marry women who have been married previously and whose earlier marriage (or marriages) has ended in divorce. An important distinction is made between a marriage with a girl who has never been married before, and marriages with women who have been married previously.

585 302 a) Marriage with a virgin. The adult Kanuri woman wears her hair in a striking coiffure which resembles a Trojan helmet. Adolescent girls who have not yet married wear their hair in totally different fashion. Their hair-do is divided into three parts, and they are referred to as kalə yaskə, a term for their particular developmental stage which derives from the hair-do that characterizes the stage. Since very high priority is placed on virginity for a girl before marriage, a first marriage with a kalə yaskə is equivalent to marriage with a virgin.

584 Marriages are frequently arranged, but consent of both boy and girl plays a part, even in marriages in which the boy is marrying for the first time and the girl is a kalə yaskə. A boy may come to his father to say that he likes a particular girl. It frequently happens then that the boy's father will go to the house of the father of the girl, bringing presents with him, to arrange the marriage. The father of the boy may also select a particular girl as wife for his son, ask the boy if he likes the girl, then make the arrangements with the father of the girl. A talaka may marry the daughter of a very good family, [565] if he can raise the money needed for her bride-price. The sole

583 paid before the marriage or it is not a legal marriage. Mori, too, can vary in size, but it is the smallest of the three payments, and usually amounts to several shillings.

585 The wedding itself is very brief. It is presided over by a Malam, before many witnesses. The Malam asks the names of bride and bridegroom, asks them if they wish to marry, reads a section of the Koran. Then all pray, and the ceremony is ended as kola nuts (coro) are distributed to all present, and gifts are given to Malam and luwali. That evening, the husband's closest friends come to the bride's house to take her to the house of her husband. While her friends cry and try to hold her back, the husband's friends take the bride off by horse, and leave her at her husband's house. One friend of the girl refuses to leave her until the husband pays fugurum (or ferorum), which is the set amount of thirty shillings, alike for rich and poor. Fugu means hymen. The friend keeps several shillings of the fugurum for herself and gives the remainder to the mother of the bride, payment to her for protecting her daughter's virtue.

585 626 Virginity of the girl is attested to by blood stains on a white blanket which has been spread on the wedding bed. The blood-stained blanket is taken from the room the following morning by friends of the girl and brought to her mother. If it is stained, mother praises daughter, and her friends parade it throughout the neighborhood. If it is not stained, the girl is cursed by all. If the husband finds that his bride is not a

585 virgin, he beats her that night, and proclaims it openly. Both
626 the girl and her mother feel shame; the husband, in turn, feels that he has been defrauded and has gotten a bad bargain. The fugurum money, however, is not repaid him. Though the Kanuri know that the hymen may be removed surgically, and that the Arabs do do this in order to make the wedding night less painful to the bride, they never do it themselves; the hymen is always forcefully broken.

585 On the following day, friends of the girl come to cook for her and for her husband, and they do this for seven days, while the bride does nothing except bathe and decorate herself while
834 visitors come to greet her. Her husband is permitted to resume having intercourse with her after four days. If he has another wife, he does not sleep with her for those seven days, nor does she cook for him during that period.

b) Marriage with a divorced woman. The above description of marriage practices represents the marriage of a man with a kalə yaskə, described as a virgin, and usually, though not always a virgin. More properly, such a marriage should be called a girl's first marriage, in contrast to subsequent marriages.
586 Should she be divorced, the woman enters a totally different cat-
587 egory in the social structure. She becomes a <u>zogor</u>, and marriage with a zogor is different in many respects from marriage with a kalə yaskə. The status of a man does not change significantly after a divorce, consequently there is no category for a man corresponding to that of the zogor. His first marriage fre-

583 This determines
434 that for the majority of the population, marriages take place from
[585] about November to the end of February. The exceptions to this rule occur among those with a steady source of income or access to loans.
583 The agnatic kin group plus own-mother, if she is able, can be counted
602 on to help as well. As we have seen in Chapter IV, exceptions to this traditional custom can be found when a relative is against a young man's marriage because it will deprive the relative of the social and economic advantages of the young man's dependence.

583 The Kanuri say that a man who is not in debt to his friends
585 after contracting and carrying out a marriage has no friends. In other
426 words, for everyone, except the extremely wealthy, it is a mark of one's
572 own social role in a relational network to borrow from friends at the time of one's wedding. Failure to do so is a declaration by implication that the marrying individual does not trust his friends well enough to become obligated to them. His friends may also suspect that he has enough liquid capital to be independent of them (and benevolent superiors). Such action may easily lead to a flurry of attempts to borrow money from the prospective bridegroom as soon as the wedding is over.
583 Finally, a young man may expect and borrow money from anyone, besides
585 the above, to whom he renders service and to whom he gives discipline-
426 respect. Indeed a compound head or any political figure knows that lend-
571 ing and giving money for weddings is a primary method of maintaining subservience of subordinates.

583 In Kanuri society there are two related ways of regarding
585 the cost of carrying out a marriage (male speaking). Firstly, there is the cost of the entire proceedings, including cloth purchases, gifts of sundries, soap, perfumes, oil, a ram, fees to participant friends, entertainers, bridewealth, etc., minus the gifts from the girl's family and

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585 the receipt of gifts from friends and relatives. Secondly, within this overall expense there is the bridewealth itself. Thus when considering marriage in Bornu it is necessary to distinguish between the capital outlay made for "taking" a woman,(1) and the total capital outlay for initiating and going through with a marriage proceeding. A Kanuri male can usually recall the exact figure of his bridewealth for most of his past marriages, but has some difficulty in remembering the entire marriage cost of all but the most recent of his nuptials.

[128] Rather than abstract out bits and pieces of the events of the marriage costs it will be more comprehensible to give a brief description of the payments made in connection with marriage inception in the chronological order of their occurrence.

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584 In the case of a virgin marriage, negotiations are initiated through a gift called the kwororam (the asking-a-question fee or gift). This gift is given most commonly by an intermediary for the husband to the luwali (guardian) as a gift to the girl's mother and/or senior female relatives. Included may often be a small gift for the girl herself. Information varies as to the amount of kwororam. Some felt that it should be fairly small, running from one to two pounds in cash value for the soap, cloth, pomade, perfume and other female sundries of which it was made up. But the amount is indefinite and there is room for haggling. One informant reported being told by a young girl's luwali that although he was certainly the favoured suitor another man of higher rank had been offering a slightly higher bridewealth payment. The anxious suitor was

[192] [595] (1) The Kanuri never use the verb "to buy" when referring to marriage, substituting instead the verb "to take". This was explained as being a necessary distinction in the old days when concubines could be bought in the markets, while wives were always married, i.e. "taken".

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602 portion of the money for himself.. The pattern emphasises the patrilateral group, especially the relatives living in close association with the luwali who are often as not his agnates. However, the girl's mother, her mother's brother and her mother's own parents, if present or nearby, always receive a small part of the luwaliram.

587 With increased age and number of divorces, marriages become more and more an individual matter between the male and the female participants and the woman tends to take over the luwaliram payment for herself. She may be living with relatives at the time who often serve as her intermediaries and collect the payments for her. In this case she gives them a small amount of the luwaliram payment.

584 With the completion of the luwaliram payment the final ar-
585 rangements for the marriage are settled by the parties. The day of the wedding is set in the period of the next few weeks as well as the place of formalization and the price of the sada'a, or second and final payment of the bridewealth. During the time of the luwaliram payments the man tries to iron out the details of the wedding party. How many drummers will there be? How many people are coming (if the girl lives in another town)? What will be the means of conveyance for her and her dowry to the house of the groom? Will many of the wedding party besides the girl's mother stay for the one week confinement period (if she is a virgin)? A score of such questions and decisions about them are usually discussed and agreed upon at this time.

584 If the marriage does not take place after the payment of the
691 luwaliram, generally speaking it can be expected that litigation of some kind will result. If the man breaks it off himself, then the girl's family (or the woman) usually feel aggrieved and try to keep some or even all of the payment. Contrarily, if the girl's family breaks off the wedding,

584 the man requests that the luwaliram payment be returned to him (as it should be traditionally). Very often a man may try initially in the judicial proceedings to regain his entire investments, asking not only for the luwaliram, but a sum which includes his entire outlay of capital to date for the wedding. In such cases the position is usually just a beginning for bargaining. However, if the adjudicator can be convinced that the girl's or woman's group intended to defraud, or break faith from the very beginning of negotiations, the man might possibly be awarded more than just the luwaliram by the court. On the other hand, either party has the right of retraction before the formal wedding day ceremony (sada'a) which for the man means forfeiture of his payments, and for the woman and her group, means repayment of the luwaliram to the rejected suitor. For example, in one case observed, a man was repaid his luwaliram because a higher bidder had come on the scene.

585 In the early morning on the day of the wedding the groom with his male friends and relatives, along with male friends and relatives of the bride's household, meet at the household of the luwali, or at the house of a ranking person of the ward or town for the sada'a. The tendency is to use the luwali's house more among higher ranks in the city, while lower status groups and rural people generally use the compound of a local ranking person. At this time the second and final payment of the bridewealth, the sada'a is made. It is most commonly referred to in Maria Theresa dollars although most often paid in pound sterling. For peasant non-virgin weddings in the Magumeri area during 1956-7, the price seemed to be fairly standardized around the value of 4 M.T. dollars (28-32 shillings). The disposal of this payment is similar to that of the luwaliram.

The major part of the ceremony is given over to examining

3: Cohen E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1960 MS14 Kanuri MS14

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publically the gifts from the girl's family to the husband-elect. These can include such items as men's robes, pillows, mats, money, grain, sometimes a horse, or a saddle. Male informants expressed the opinion that the closer the gifts to the groom approximated the combined value of the luwaliram and the sada'a, the more satisfactory was the entire affair. In only one case was such equivalence ever observed (1) although tales were told of others. These stories always referred to a lower ranking individual who had married the virgin ward of a rich, powerful person. The hero of the story was always spoken of as having been given a girl and a large amount of property equal to or surpassing his bridewealth payments. Taken for granted in these reports was the loyalty and service which the husband-elect gave to his benefactor both before and after the marriage. The only other incidence when gifts to the groom are of a grandiose nature occurs when both the girl's family and the groom are rich, powerful persons and there is competition in the gift giving.

All the males who attend this ceremony, contribute a little money to the groom. It is collected by the sowa kura (big friend) who serves as "best man" for the wedding. He gives the mallams who lead the prayers a little money, and presents the official or ranking person at whose house the sada'a took place a small fee, if this person was not the girl's luwali and takes charge of the gifts to the husband-elect. During the entire wedding he pays the proper people, accepts gifts for the groom, brings him information as to what is going on and what is re-

(1) In this case the virgin girl was being married, high above her status, to a highly respected and fairly well-to-do person, by local rural standards. The father-in-law (luwali in this case) felt that he must try to give this new husband as good an impression of the girl's family as possible, and please him in every way. Consequently, the gifts to the groom were much larger than usual.

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583 quired, heads the party bringing the bride to the groom's house, and generally acts as a middleman between the groom and everyone with whom the latter is supposed to have dealings. Informants commented that this allows the groom to remain unruffled by the many decisions and social obligations which are occasioned by the wedding ceremony.

585 After the sada'a and luwaliram have been paid and the gifts to the groom exchanged the bridewealth payment is completed. However, there remain the rest of the marriage expenses which can be impressive. During the entire day of the wedding the kususu (female head of the wedding proceedings for the groom) demands that the groom supply the celebrating women with kola nuts and tobacco flowers for staining their teeth and pay any drummers who have been employed for the dancing celebrations. At a virgin marriage a special payment, the kususuram, must be paid through the kususu (woman head of the wedding) consisting of a ram, soap, shoes, and kola nuts for the women. This expenditure is used for the performance of a special hair washing ceremony held on the first day of marriage. At all weddings the kususu requires a small gift for her services. This is carried over to the sowa kura (the "best man") who must also be given a gift of a robe and/or some money for his efforts at the wedding. When the groom's party (minus the groom) brings the virgin girl from her household a small payment of money (majila) must be paid to the eldest unmarried sister of the young virgin, if any reside in the compound, so that she will feel no jealousy and spite over her young sister's marriage.

Since the girl must traditionally arrive on horseback in any kind of marriage, the man holding the bridle and guiding the horse is given a small fee for the safe delivery of the bride. The wedding party of singing, joyful women must also be given gifts by the groom. At one

• 585 virgin wedding in which 15 women had come thirty miles on foot with their little relative and friend who was to be married, each of them was given five shillings by the bridegroom, the girl's mother was given twenty shillings and the two drummers, who had accompanied the party, were given fifteen shillings each. The groom had also paid the expences of the journey which included the rental of two camels for five pounds. In other words the journey had cost him somewhere around ten or eleven
583 pounds. His bridewealth payments had been eight M.T. Dollars and seventeen pounds sterling or about twenty pounds, which means that the bridal journey alone had cost him as much as half of his bridewealth payments.

Before the consummation in the privacy of his hut, the groom must bargain with the young bride over the <u>ferorum</u> (consummation money, literally: the virgin's fee). This is usually achieved quite rapidly since there is a fairly standard price range of one to two pounds for this payment and agreement is commonly reached after a short conversation.

583 One final point must be made about Kanuri bridewealth; this is the idea of <u>use</u>. Kanuri moral tradition defines the bridewealth payment as a transfer of property given for the use of the woman by her husband. This is not a static but a processual arrangement which changes
583 its nature through time. Thus, if a woman leaves a man within the first
586 year after marriage, before he has had a chance to utilize her services in agricultural production, then he has "not had his money's worth" and requires some of it back. This applies just as well to women who are in seclusion; indicating that it is the total function of the woman whose use the male feels he has acquired. If a divorce results very rapidly after the marriage through any fault of the woman, the male usually feels aggrieved and demands that part of the bridewealth be returned. His

the aid of magical devices.

Besides the greater elaboration and expense of a virgin marriage it is also distinguished by the delivery of the woman's dowry (larusa) to the groom's compound the day after the wedding. In non-virgin marriages the dowry is brought with the woman on the wedding night. This is due to the necessity of proving the virgin status of the young girl. Her material goods cannot be brought over to the husband's house until the terms of the contract are acclaimed as valid. If her virginity is questionable on the marriage night, then a litigation either in or out of court begins, wherein her status as a virgin must be re-assessed and the entire marriage arrangement re-evaluated. The whole community is witness to this validation since the successful deflowering is made public in the middle of the night or early morning by a procession of women of both families, friends and neighbours, who go round the town beating enamel basins, with a drummer in the lead. This serves as an announcement of the marriage consummation and of the discovery of the girl's virgin status by her husband. If there is no procession every one knows something is amiss. Among more traditional families, the groom announces the successful test by emerging from his hut immediately after defloration to shoot a gun into the air.

The second classification of marriage is the kanu gwojin (he takes a woman) which means marrying a woman who has already been married before and is now divorced. There is a great deal of variation in the initiation of such a marriage, but as a general rule it is carried on with much less ceremony and a far greater degree of individual choice is exercised by the couple themselves. This freedom increases with age as well as being more common for all ages (except first marriages) among the lower ranks of society. As a man and woman grow older they demand

As a man and woman grow older they demand
and are given progressively more independence of choice in all matters including marriage. This is more likely among the peasants. For here second marriages are not as likely to be used as mechanisms for creating, strengthening and maintaining relationship by the girl's luwali to whom it is traditional to return on the occasion of divorce. It is more likely that the upper class woman will come under the power and authority of her luwali in subsequent marriages than the lower class person who is left freer to make her own liaisons. The upper class woman although not in purda during her divorced status must be much more delicate and restrained about her movements. This necessity to maintain an appearance of probity lends itself more easily to the manipulation of the upper class woman by her luwali after her first one or two divorces than does the relative freedom of the lower class woman. Among all classes an extremely young divorcee of under fifteen is almost sure to have little freedom of choice for her second husband, although cases of such early divorce are rare.

During the harvest season (November to February) divorced women (sower) are more serious about trying to pin down one of the temporary liaisons to marriage. Men at this season are similarly inclined but tend to shop around a little before settling on one choice, unless their minds were made up before the harvest season opened. With a few exceptions (notably female) both sexes consider married status desirable and for a man, having two wives is better than having one. The exceptions to this rule are women who are either very attractive to men and thus enjoy themselves economically and sexually as unmarried women, and/or women who refuse to give up their independence for marriage. These factors are often related and as we shall see there is room for the expression of all of them within marriage. Men marry if their harvest

595 iram to spouses living at that time in his compound. In addition he gives to his current wives presents of soap, perfume, clothes, etc. equal to about half the value of similar gifts given to the new bride. In practice this is extremely various, depending upon the wealth of the male, and his estimation of his present spouse(s)' potential jealousy and opposition over the new wife. One informant was observed who, after giving his wife a substantial cash gift (under half of the luwal-iram), matched the clothes given to his new bride one for one by gifts to his present wife. It is almost universally accepted that successive wives should be younger than one another. This is followed quite widely in practice, at least for the age difference between present wife (only one) and incoming wife. This insures that the authority and rank ordained by custom be represented by an age difference which always allows for a smoother operation of the principle that the wife already in the compound is kamu kura (senior wife).

595 632 162 [589] Frequency figures on polygyny from Maguneri town are atypical because of its position as District Headquarters. This means that a larger proportion of single males are present than is usual in rural areas, especially since Maguneri is one of the smaller District Headquarters, and the administrative personnel and their subordinates (these latter are often single young men) make up a larger element of the population than is commonly the case. The following table on number of wives is taken from figures gathered between July and November of 1956.[1] [125] [36] given by 78 household heads in the towns of Maguneri, Chingowa, and Ngubura, which form a triangle to the south of Maguneri, each being

[595] (1) Therefore these data were collected before the harvest of the 1956 crop which brings on the marrying season. The respondents ranged across an extremely wide range of occupations, but all kept up a compound and all worked farms near their towns.

established small wards and hamlets are the bases of networks of relationships among the males. Men tend to find extra-marital partners in wards, hamlets, and towns other than their own, within the marketing community, since the women of their own ward or hamlet are usually the wives of their close friends and relatives.

It must not be supposed from the above discussion that there is any positive evaluation of divorce in Kanuri culture. On the contrary, long marriages are valued and divorce is considered by many to be a melancholy breakdown of relationship. Thus the writer was asked on numerous occasions to use his prestige in the community in order to re-unite separated couples.

This desire for long marriages is expressed ritually at the formalization ceremony (sada't) on the day of the marriage. After the fatiha prayer has been said by the assembled males, it is customary for the person who has been married the longest to stand up first. If a European is present he fills the function, not because of his superior status, but because European marriages are well known for their durability. Informants stated that this little ritual was an expression of hope and a blessing on the present marriage for its long duration.

Personality factors, mutual affection and trust, preferential marriage, economic benefits, prestige accorded by the union to either party and/or their families can all contribute to the stability of marriage. Furthermore, it may be generalized that the longer the term of marriage between a man and a woman, the greater the chance that their marriage will continue. Most divorces seem to take place in the first two years of marriage for non-virgin marriages, and after about four to five years in the case of first marriages (of females).

(1) The first verse of the Koran.

881 582 informants feel that it is better if a girl is married before she menstruates and claim that religion prescribes this as the best kind of first marriage for a girl. Exceptions are, of course, quite common and not regarded as very bad as long as the girl is a "virgin" (i.e. 585 proven so on her wedding night). When she marries for the first time [302] a girl does not automatically change her status. She is still considered a fero gana (a small girl) just as she was before marriage, and for some little time continues to wear her hair in the young girl style. As one informant put it:

[833] 881 [885] She knows nothing, she copulates yes, but takes no interest in such things, there is no pleasure in it for her. When she bleeds, then she is kamu kura (a mature woman) and she knows everything and will take pleasure from sexual intercourse. When the first blood comes the girl will feel shame and tell no one, only her close friends, who will tell her mother. Her mother will come and gather together her friends and relatives (female) and cook food and give sada'a (offerings to the poor).

885 [302] Sometime after the onset of menstruation the young girl changes her hair style to the typical and distinctive styling of the adult Kanuri woman. It is not necessary for her to become a completely different person immediately upon taking up the status of married woman. Indeed, she still retains many of her childhood friends. In a completely new locale she first obtains age-mate friends who are, as often as not, pre-pubertal children.

Over the first one or two years of marriage, young brides are more and more to be seen with the other adult women of the compound and the neighbourhood whose main activities and interests centre around marketing, cooking, obtaining water, gossiping and engaging in women's festivities. Less and less are they interested in playing and chatting with the young pre-pubertal children, whose activities become progressively remote from their own.

369 Another difference noticeable immediately to the 216.
342 stranger is the house type. In the cities, people for the most part live
829 in mud dwellings, often with corrugated iron roofing, while in the "bush" the peasant contents himself with a grass-roofed hut. In 1957-58 several of the rich leaders in Bornu were building, under private contract, city houses for themselves of burnt brick, with steel windows, electricity, and cement floors.

369 In Maguneri, complaints against rural people are always heard
829 from the N.A. officials stationed there, whose homes are in Maiduguri, the capital. The constantly speak of the permanent residents of the bush as dirty and immoral, and claim that they would never marry a "bush" girl.
[585] When the District Head did marry a girl from a neighbouring rural town, the wedding foods cooked by her female relatives and distributed to the dignitaries of Maguneri were of such a low quality that it became a standing joke to tell of the rural kind of marriage that the District Head had made. On the other hand, the rural people do not feel as great a difference between themselves and others of their own social level in the city. They know the city to be more heterogeneous ethnically than the rural areas, but this does not affect their lives a great deal, either in the bush or when in the city on visits. The rural person does, however, distinguish between himself and those like him, and the civil servant from the city who is in the bush to administer it. These administrative personnel are feared, respected, and considered to occupy a different world whose income is higher, and whose power is dangerous. The rural peasant consequently avoids the civil servant in the bush, unless his confidence is won over through continued and harmless association.

Class as Status and Socio-Cultural Segmentation

21 In a complex stratified society having many dimensions of status and involving social mobility up or down these dimensions, the